

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Farm Service Agency
Washington, DC 20250

Notice OCCSP-4

For: State and County Offices

**Late-Filed Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP)
Applications for Program Years 2020 and 2021**

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

The OCCSP signup deadline for the 2020 program year was November 2, 2020, and the deadline for the 2021 program year was November 1, 2021. 1-OCCSP, Exhibit 1 delegates authority to SED to review and approve OCCSP applications filed by December 31 of the following program year.

The Organic and Transitional Education and Certification Program (OTECF) was recently announced, with a signup period of November 8, 2021, through January 7, 2022, for program years 2020 and 2021. Outreach related to OTECF may result in more awareness of OCCSP among producers who were eligible for 2020 and 2021 OCCSP but did not file an OCCSP application before the applicable deadlines.

B Purpose

This notice advises State and County Offices:

- that SED's are delegated authority to approve late-filed OCCSP applications for program years 2020 and 2021 that are filed through January 7, 2022
- how to notify the National Office when SED grants relief for a late-filed application.

Disposal Date	Distribution
February 1, 2022 11-26-21	State Offices; State Offices relay to County Offices

2 Notification and Outreach

A Notification

If SED determines to grant relief for a late-filed OCCSP application, the State Office will send an email with the calculated payment amount for each scope to both of the following:

- Jeanne Schmidt at **jeanne.schmidt@usda.gov**
- Kay Niner at **kay.niner@usda.gov**.

Note: Emails should include a copy to Christopher Vazquez at **christopher.vazquez@usda.gov**.

The National Office will notify the State Office when funds have been allocated to issue the payment.

B Outreach Resources and Responsibilities

County Offices should help organic producers who are applying for OCCSP and OTECP identify other FSA programs for which they may be eligible, and work with the State Outreach Coordinator to further assist these producers in understanding FSA programs and resources.

Many organic producers may be new to working with FSA and unfamiliar with FSA application procedures. They may need additional assistance in understanding the application processes and determining appropriate documentation for program participation.

Outreach resources for organic producers are available to employees on FSA's Office of Outreach Intranet site at **<https://inside.fsa.usda.gov/operations/office-of-outreach/program-toolkits/index>**. Resources will continue to be added to the "Program Toolkits" page. Examples of available resources will include:

- outreach program guide with key program takeaways that should be shared when engaging with producers and stakeholders, and tips for targeted outreach
- links to relevant organic resources developed by other USDA agencies
- template program presentations.

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3 Action

A State Office Action

State Offices will:

- ensure that County Offices are notified of the contents of this notice
- notify the National Office when SED grants relief for late-filed OCCSP applications as directed in this notice.

B County Office Action

County Offices will

- advise interested certified organic producers and handlers of how to submit a late-filed OCCSP application
- process late-filed OCCSP applications according to 1-OCCSP and this notice.